

The *Great* **FABLES** *Crossover*
part **7** of 9



Willingham · Sturges · Akins · Pepoy · Green

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#85

The Great *!!!* FABLES Crossover

part **7** of 9



A PAIR OF JACKS

The Story So Far... In the wake of Boy Blue's death, Stinky the Badger has launched a fledgling religion centered around the slain hero; unfortunately, this new faith has mistakenly identified none other than Jack Horner as the Second Coming. Meanwhile, in the Catskill Mountains, a battle rages on and we learn that our Fabled heroes (led by a little girl named Bigby Wolf) don't need to defeat the Genres — they only need to hold them off long enough to allow Kevin Thorn to write our Universe out of existence. Apparently Kevin has somehow gotten past his evil twin, Writer's Block, and it appears there's no stopping him. But, as Jack Horner is about to find out, appearances can be quite deceiving...

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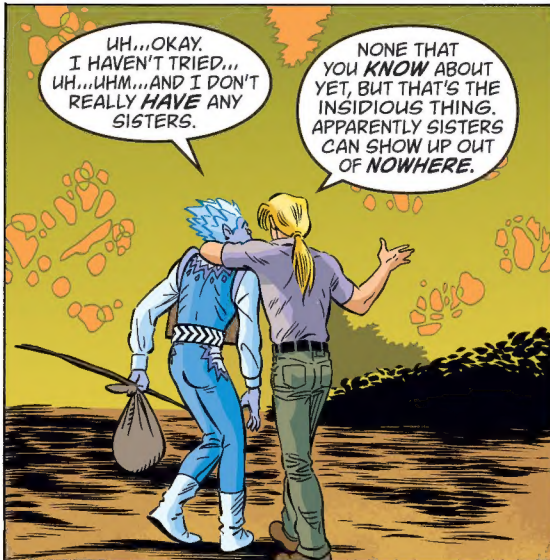
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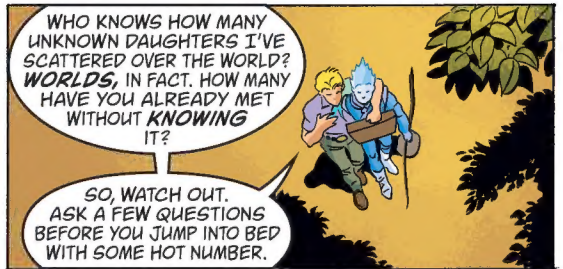
I SUPPOSE YOU LOOKED ME UP WANTING FATHERLY **ADVICE**. WELL, FIRST THINGS FIRST, SON: **SELDOM** SLEEP WITH WHORES AND **NEVER** SLEEP WITH YOUR SISTERS.

I'LL TELL YOU OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF AS I THINK OF IT.



UH...OKAY. I HAVEN'T TRIED... UH...UHM...AND I DON'T REALLY **HAVE** ANY SISTERS.

NONE THAT YOU **KNOW** ABOUT YET, BUT THAT'S THE INSIDIOUS THING. APPARENTLY SISTERS CAN SHOW UP OUT OF **NOWHERE**.



WHO KNOWS HOW MANY UNKNOWN DAUGHTERS I'VE SCATTERED OVER THE WORLD? **WORLDS**, IN FACT. HOW MANY HAVE YOU ALREADY MET WITHOUT **KNOWING** IT?

SO, WATCH OUT. ASK A FEW QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU JUMP INTO BED WITH SOME HOT NUMBER.



AND IT'S PROBABLY GOOD TO TRY TO REMEMBER ALL THE WOMEN YOU SLEEP WITH, SO YOUR **OWN** SON DOESN'T RUN INTO THE SAME PROBLEM WHEN IT'S **HIS** TURN.

OKAY, GRANTED, REMEMBERING ALL THE WOMEN ISN'T POSSIBLE. WE'RE NOT SUPER GENIUSES AFTER ALL. BUT DO THE BEST YOU CAN.



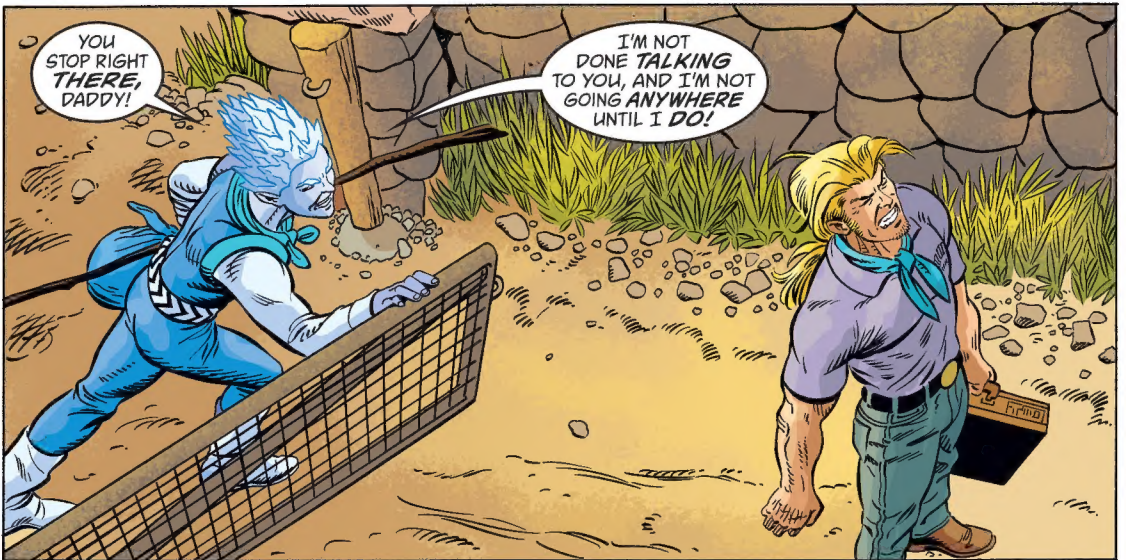
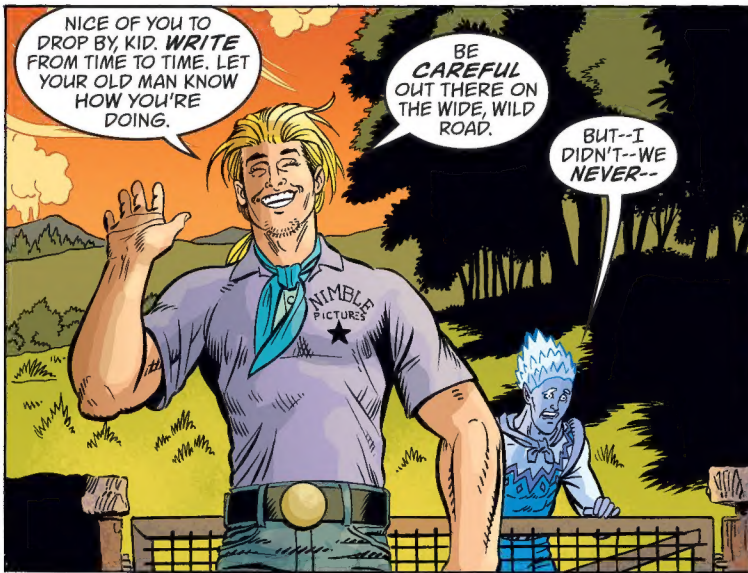
AND LET'S SEE...

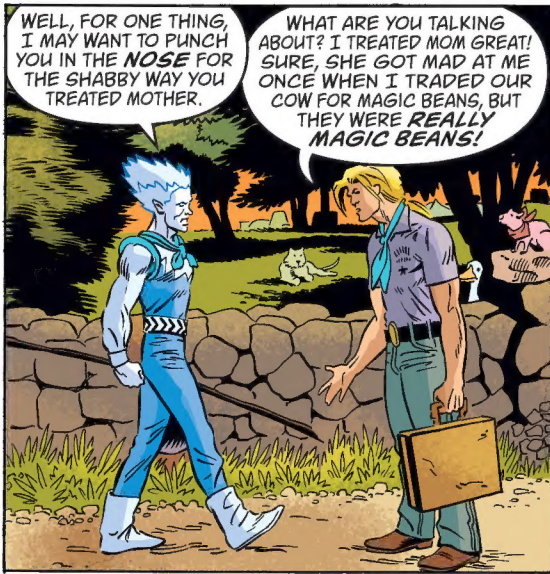
WHAT ELSE?

OH YEAH, DON'T LEND **MONEY**-- EXCEPT TO YOUR DAD, IF HE NEEDS IT.



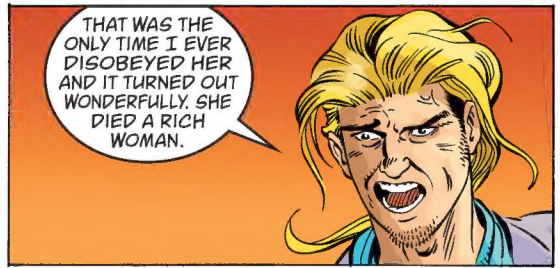
I THINK THAT'S ALL YOU NEED FOR NOW.





WELL, FOR ONE THING, I MAY WANT TO PUNCH YOU IN THE **NOSE** FOR THE SHABBY WAY YOU TREATED MOTHER.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I TREATED MOM GREAT! SURE, SHE GOT MAD AT ME ONCE WHEN I TRADED OUR COW FOR MAGIC BEANS, BUT THEY WERE **REALLY MAGIC BEANS!**



THAT WAS THE ONLY TIME I EVER DISOBEYED HER AND IT TURNED OUT WONDERFULLY. SHE DIED A RICH WOMAN.



NOT THE WAY YOU TREATED **YOUR** MOTHER! THE WAY YOU TREATED **MY** MOTHER! CAN'T YOU FOLLOW A SIMPLE TRAIN OF THOUGHT?



WHO THE HELL--?



THE SNOW QUEEN, YOU MORON! THE GODDAMN SNOW QUEEN!



OH, YEAH-HER. HEY, KID, DON'T **CURSE** WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR MOM. WERE YOU RAISED BY INGRATES?

AND WHAT'S ALL THIS GUFF ABOUT THE WAY I TREATED HER? WHAT ABOUT THE WAY SHE TREATED **ME?**



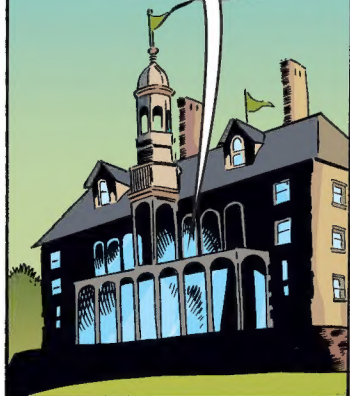
SHE LOVED YOU AND WAS FAITHFUL TO YOU, BUT YOU SLEPT WITH EVERY GIRL IN HER KINGDOM-- INCLUDING TRYING TO SLEEP WITH HER SISTERS.

SHE WAS KIND AND GENTLE AND BELOVED BY ALL. BUT **YOU** TURNED HER EVIL!

EVIL!

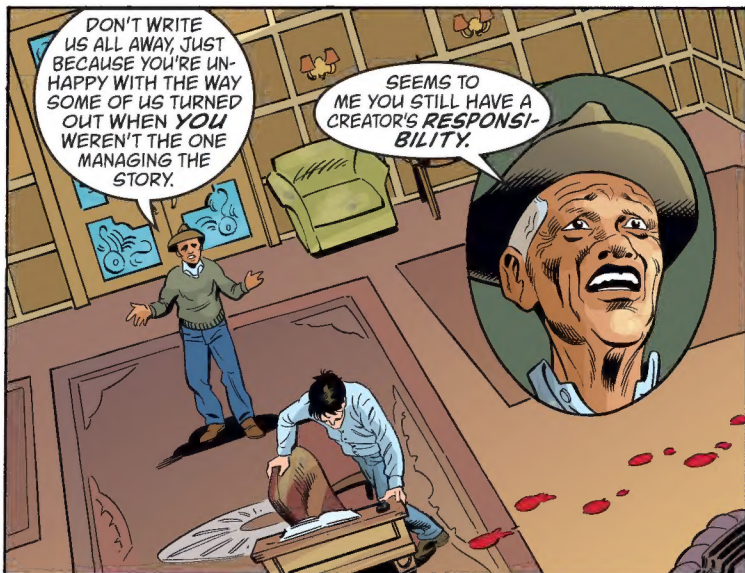
AT THE CATSKILLS RESORT IN WHICH KEVIN THORN HAS TAKEN UP RESIDENCE...

PLEASE DON'T DO IT, MISTER THORN!



DON'T WRITE US ALL AWAY, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE UNHAPPY WITH THE WAY SOME OF US TURNED OUT WHEN YOU WEREN'T THE ONE MANAGING THE STORY.

SEEMS TO ME YOU STILL HAVE A CREATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY.



NO, I HAVE AN **AUTHOR'S** RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE THE STORY AS GOOD AS POSSIBLE.

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THAT "ALL WRITING IS REWRITING"? EVER HEAR OF THE STORY-TELLER'S RULE, "KILL YOUR DARLINGS"?



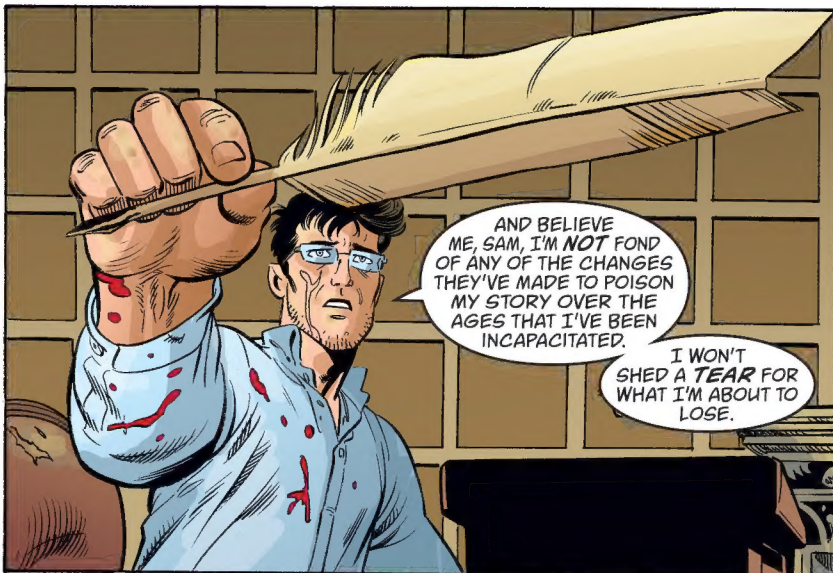
IT MEANS ONE HAS TO BE PREPARED TO WIPE OUT ANY CHARACTER, ANY PASSAGE, FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF THE STORY.

NO MATTER HOW FOND ONE IS OF THAT PARTICULAR CHARACTER OR PASSAGE.



AND BELIEVE ME, SAM, I'M **NOT** FOND OF ANY OF THE CHANGES THEY'VE MADE TO POISON MY STORY OVER THE AGES THAT I'VE BEEN INCAPACITATED.

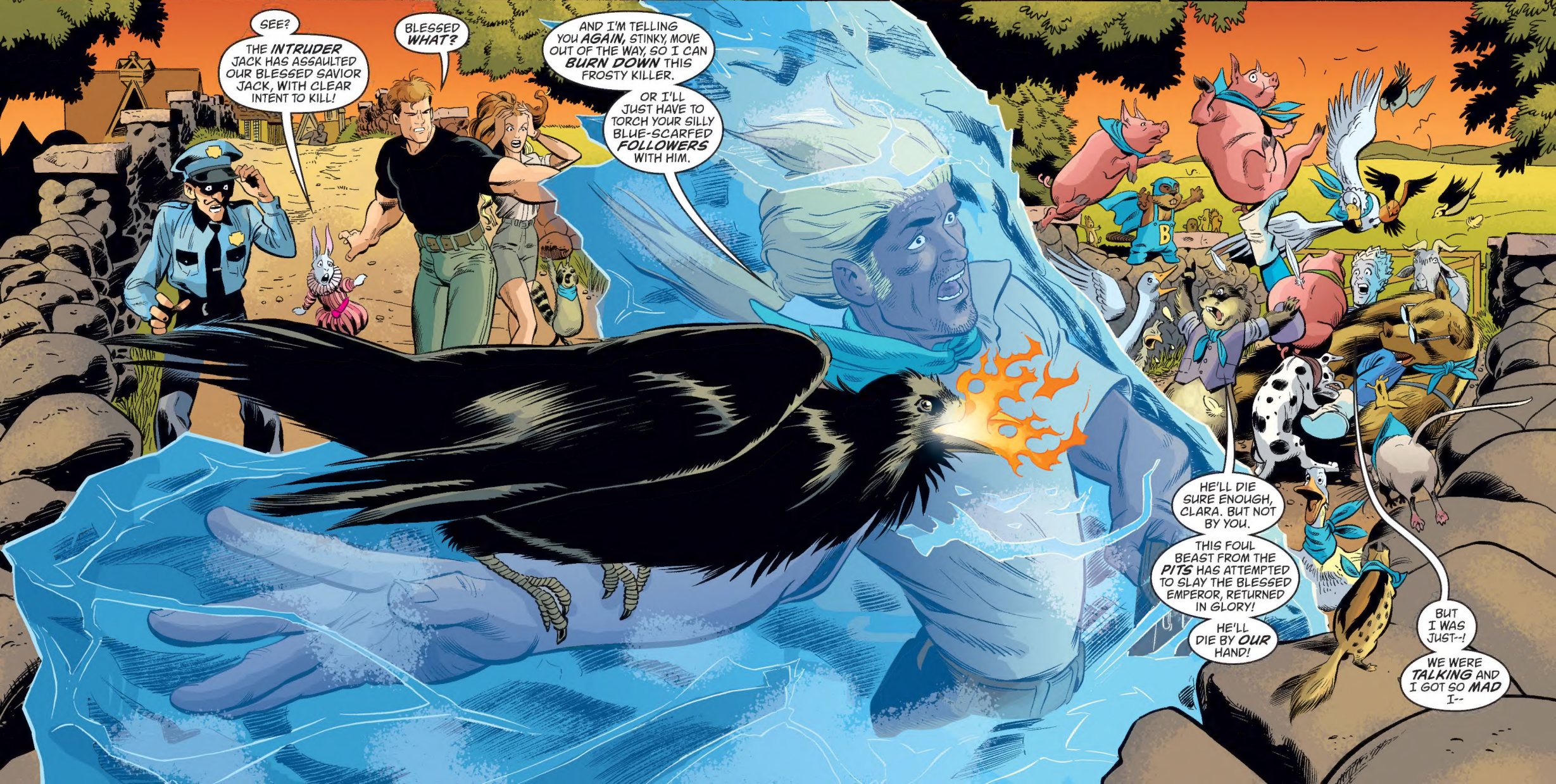
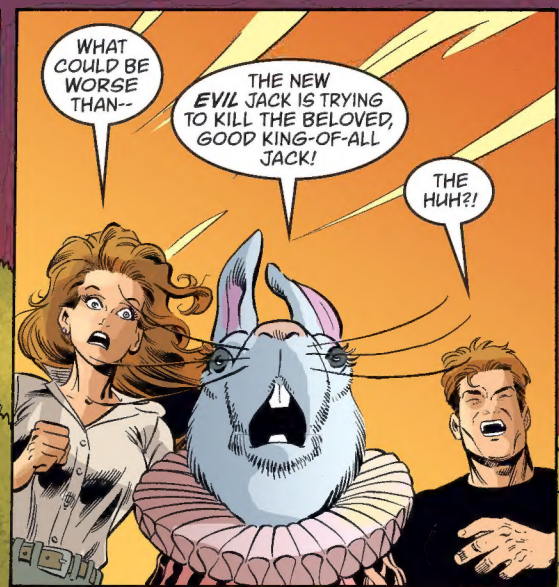
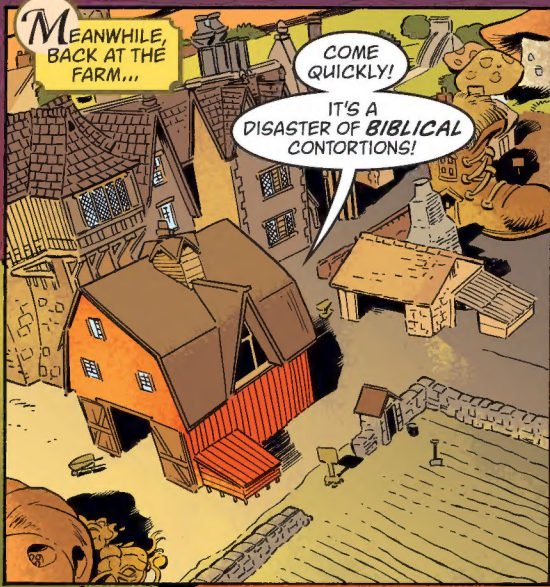
I WON'T SHED A **TEAR** FOR WHAT I'M ABOUT TO LOSE.

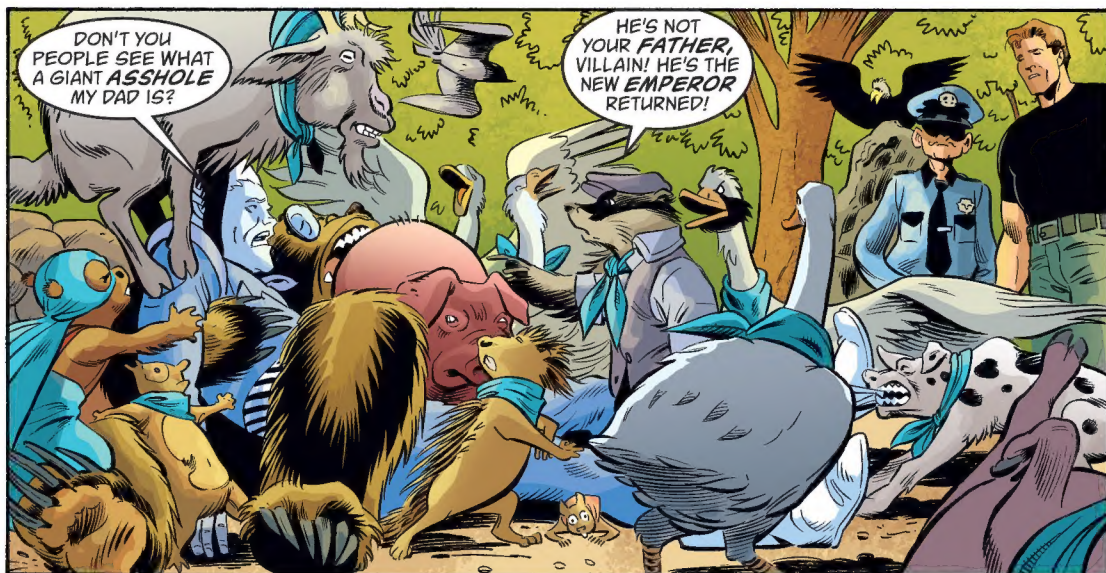


NOW, GO AWAY AND LEAVE ME IN PEACE TO WRITE.

ENJOY YOUR LAST THOUGHTS, YOUR LAST MOMENT OF EXISTENCE, BEFORE I **UNCREATE** YOU.







DON'T YOU PEOPLE SEE WHAT A GIANT ASSHOLE MY DAD IS?

HE'S NOT YOUR FATHER, VILLAIN! HE'S THE NEW EMPEROR RETURNED!



HE'S BOY BLUE RESTORED TO US!



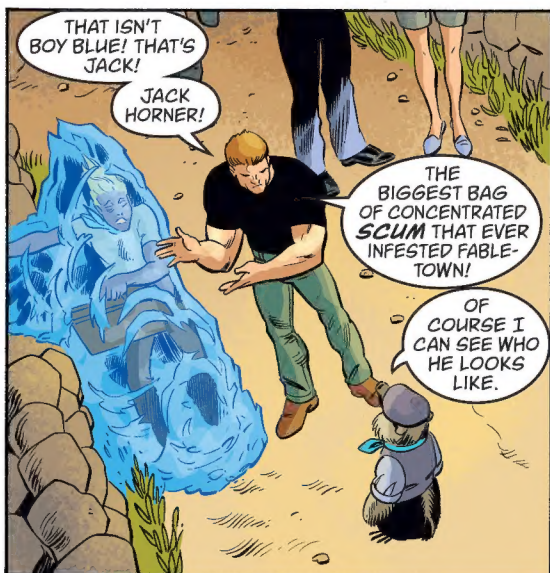
WHAT?

STINKY, ARE YOU CRAZY?



WELL, OF COURSE YOU'RE CRAZY AS A LOON, OR YOU WOULDN'T HAVE CONCOCTED THIS BIZARRE NEW CULT OF YOURS, BUT--

--ARE YOU FREAKING OUT-OF-YOUR-FURRY-LITTLE-SKULL CRAZY?!



THAT ISN'T BOY BLUE! THAT'S JACK!

JACK HORNER!

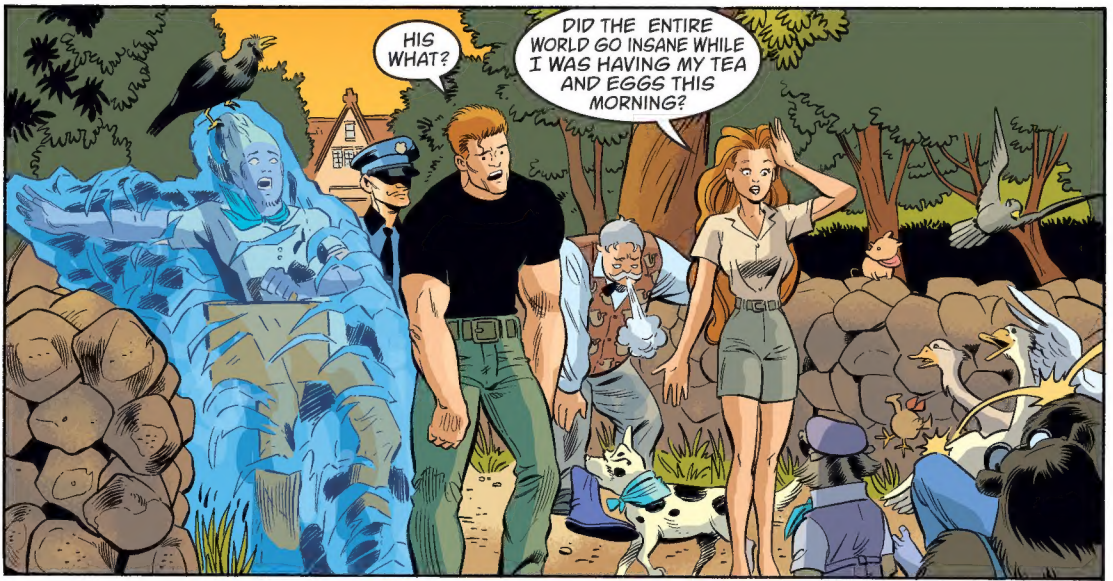
THE BIGGEST BAG OF CONCENTRATED SCUM THAT EVER INFESTED FABLE-TOWN!

OF COURSE I CAN SEE WHO HE LOOKS LIKE.



EVEN THOUGH ALL OF YOU HUME FABLES LOOK PRETTY MUCH ALIKE.

BUT BLUE HAS TO COME TO US FIRST IN THIS DISGUISE TO WIN THE HEART OF HIS NEW EMPRESS.



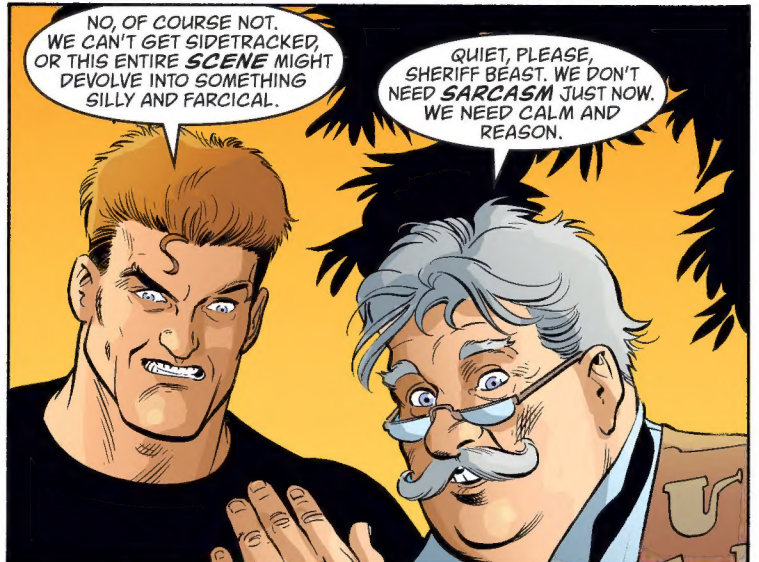
HIS WHAT?

DID THE ENTIRE WORLD GO INSANE WHILE I WAS HAVING MY TEA AND EGGS THIS MORNING?



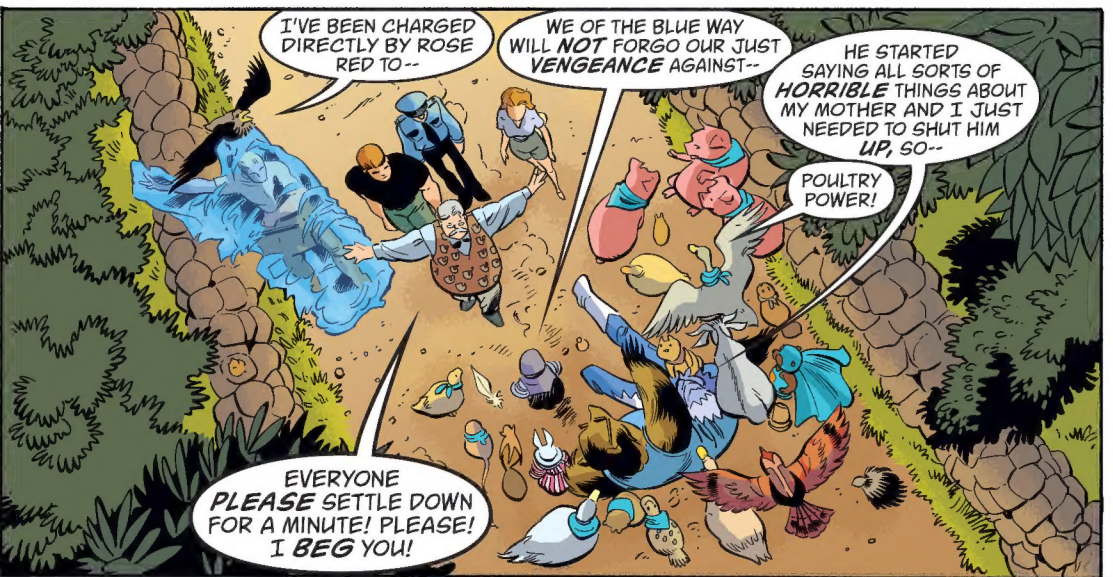
AND THAT'S ANOTHER THING, LADY! IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER THERE WILL BE NO MORE SICK PRACTICES OF HUME FABLES DINING ON THE **POULTRY UNBORN!**

HOLD ON, CHICKEN LITTLE. LET'S NOT GET OFF TRACK. WE'VE IMPORTANT BUSINESS TO CONCLUDE HERE.



NO, OF COURSE NOT. WE CAN'T GET SIDETRACKED, OR THIS ENTIRE **SCENE** MIGHT DEVOLVE INTO SOMETHING SILLY AND FARCICAL.

QUIET, PLEASE, SHERIFF BEAST. WE DON'T NEED **SARCASM** JUST NOW. WE NEED CALM AND REASON.



I'VE BEEN CHARGED DIRECTLY BY ROSE RED TO--

WE OF THE BLUE WAY WILL NOT FORGO OUR JUST VENGEANCE AGAINST--

HE STARTED SAYING ALL SORTS OF HORRIBLE THINGS ABOUT MY MOTHER AND I JUST NEEDED TO SHUT HIM UP, SO--

POULTRY POWER!

EVERYONE PLEASE SETTLE DOWN FOR A MINUTE! PLEASE! I **BEG** YOU!



FIRST THINGS FIRST.

CLARA, WILL YOU KINDLY USE YOUR FLAME TO MELT JACK HORNER OUT OF THAT BLOCK OF ICE, BEFORE HE SUCCUMBS TO--WELL, WHATEVER HE MIGHT SUCCUMB TO.



THERE HAS TO BE A LIMIT TO HOW LONG EVEN THE MORE WELL-KNOWN FABLES CAN SURVIVE BEING FROZEN LIKE THAT.



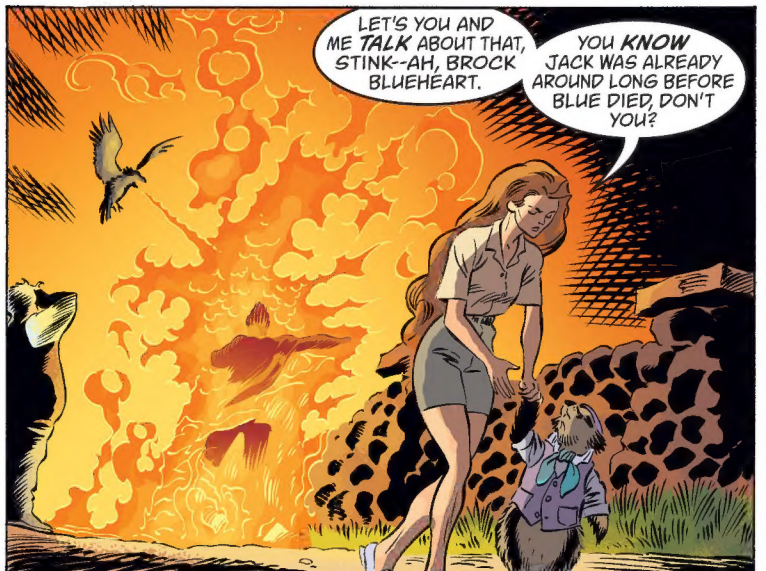
OKAY, SORRY, YOUR HONOR, BUT I HAVE TO ASK--AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO WONDERS IF WE MIGHT ALL BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT JACK?



UHM... I DON'T LIKE HIM ANY MORE THAN THE REST OF YOU, BUT, FOR REASONS BEYOND MY UNDERSTANDING, ROSE RED DID ORDER ME TO LOOK AFTER THE FELLOW.

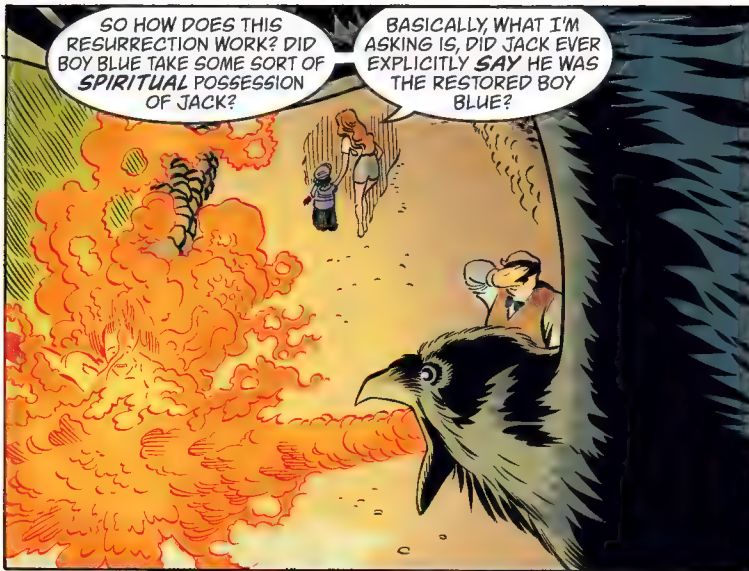


AND, RUDE AND CRUDE AS HE SEEMS TO BE, HE IS OUR RETURNED SAVIOR.



LET'S YOU AND ME TALK ABOUT THAT, STINK-AH, BROCK BLUEHEART.

YOU KNOW JACK WAS ALREADY AROUND LONG BEFORE BLUE DIED, DON'T YOU?



SO HOW DOES THIS RESURRECTION WORK? DID BOY BLUE TAKE SOME SORT OF SPIRITUAL POSSESSION OF JACK?

BASICALLY, WHAT I'M ASKING IS, DID JACK EVER EXPLICITLY SAY HE WAS THE RESTORED BOY BLUE?



UH...NO, NOT IN SO MANY WORDS, BUT IT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION THAT MAKES SENSE.

JACK WAS ENJOYING CARNAL...UH...**MARITAL** PRIVILEGES WITH ROSE RED, AND SHE KEPT CALLING HIM BLUE--AT LEAST, I THINK THAT'S WHAT SHE WAS SCREAMING.



THERE WAS AN AWFUL LOT OF SCREAMING.

AND ROSE RED IS BOY BLUE'S ONE TRUE LOVE, AND SINCE SHE'S SO PURE AND GOOD, AND WOULD NEVER SULLY HERSELF WITH ANYONE LIKE--



NOT SO MUCH FIRE NOW, CLARA. WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO JACK.



BROCK, LET ME TRY TO VERY DELICATELY EXPLAIN A FEW THINGS ABOUT THE KIND OF GIRL ROSE RED WAS BEFORE SHE CAME TO THE FARM.

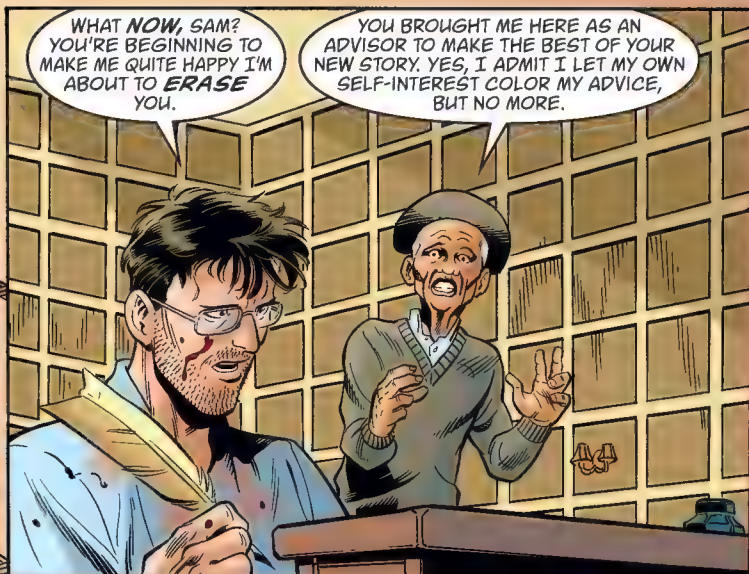
AND I THINK YOU GOOD FABLES CAN RELEASE JACK FROST NOW. WE'RE ALL DONE ATTACKING EACH OTHER TODAY.



BACK IN THE CATSKILLS...

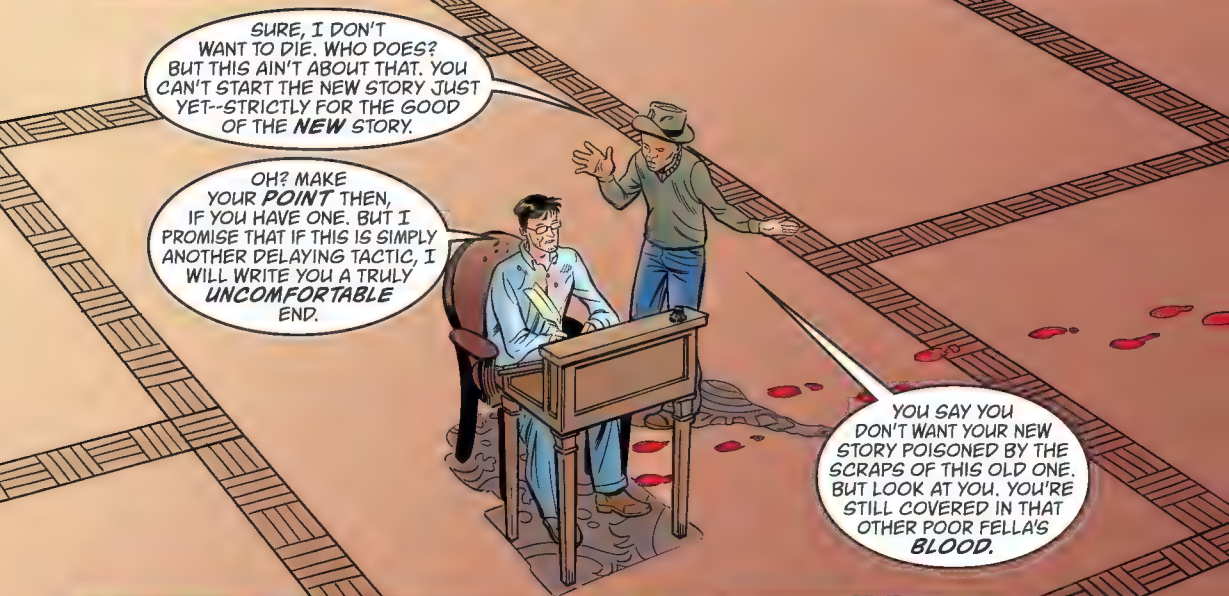
WAIT! DON'T WRITE THAT FIRST LINE!

I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING ELSE!



WHAT **NOW**, SAM? YOU'RE BEGINNING TO MAKE ME QUITE HAPPY I'M ABOUT TO **ERASE** YOU.

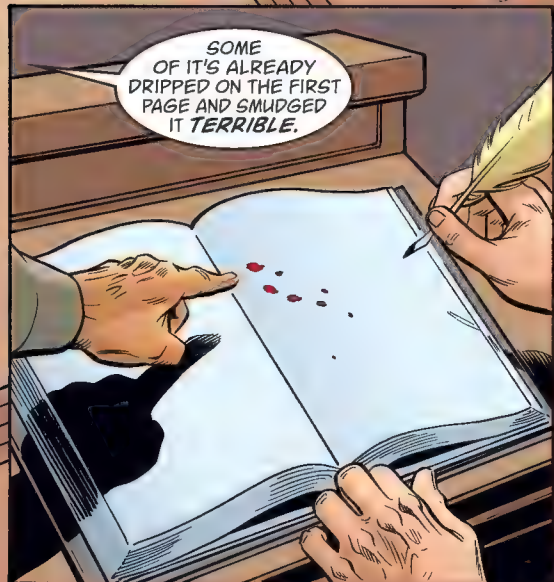
YOU BROUGHT ME HERE AS AN ADVISOR TO MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR NEW STORY. YES, I ADMIT I LET MY OWN SELF-INTEREST COLOR MY ADVICE, BUT NO MORE.



SURE, I DON'T WANT TO DIE. WHO DOES? BUT THIS AIN'T ABOUT THAT. YOU CAN'T START THE NEW STORY JUST YET--STRICTLY FOR THE GOOD OF THE **NEW** STORY.

OH? MAKE YOUR **POINT** THEN, IF YOU HAVE ONE. BUT I PROMISE THAT IF THIS IS SIMPLY ANOTHER DELAYING TACTIC, I WILL WRITE YOU A TRULY **UNCOMFORTABLE** END.

YOU SAY YOU DON'T WANT YOUR NEW STORY POISONED BY THE SCRAPS OF THIS OLD ONE. BUT LOOK AT YOU. YOU'RE STILL COVERED IN THAT OTHER POOR FELLA'S **BLOOD**.



SOME OF IT'S ALREADY DRIPPED ON THE FIRST PAGE AND SMUDGED IT **TERRIBLE**.



NOW, SEEMS TO ME, UNLESS YOUR NEW STORY JUST HAPPENS TO BE ALL ABOUT KILLING YOUR OWN BROTHER THEN YOU DON'T WANT HIS BLOOD **CONTAMINATING** IT.

DO YOU?



I NEVER THOUGHT--
LOOK AT ME. THIS WON'T DO AT ALL.



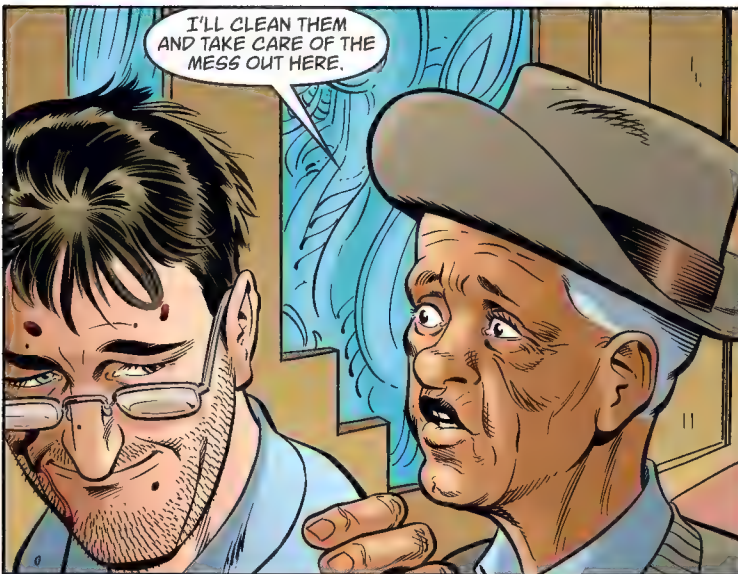
SEE? THIS TIME IT'S JUST PURE ADVICE FOR *YOUR* BENEFIT, NOT MINE. I THINK A LONG, HOT AND THOROUGH BATH IS CALLED FOR WHILE I WASH YOUR CLOTHES.
MAMA'S ONLY CHILD DIDN'T GROW UP AFRAID OF MANUAL WORK. I'LL GIVE THEM ALL A GOOD *SCRUBBING*.



IF YOU'RE REALLY DETERMINED TO START EVERYTHING ALL OVER AGAIN, BEST TO START *CLEAN*. LEAST WAYS, THAT'S HOW I LOOK AT IT.
I'M NO WRITER MYSELF, THOUGH, BUT--



NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. AN HOUR'S DELAY IS SENSIBLE.
MY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED TWIN WILL REMAIN DEAD FOR A FEW YEARS AT LEAST. THERE'S ACTUALLY *PLENTY* OF TIME TO PROCEED NOW.
YOU GO ON INTO THE BATHROOM, SIR. HAND ME YOUR CLOTHES THROUGH THE DOOR.



I'LL CLEAN THEM AND TAKE CARE OF THE MESS OUT HERE.



ALL OF THE MESS OUT HERE.

SHORTLY...

BRING JACK HORNER OUT HERE NOW!

HE HAS TO FACE OUR RIGHTEOUS VEHEMENCE!

OR VENGEANCE, EVEN!

NOW, I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ONE MORE TIME.

YOU GENTLE FABLES NEED TO CALM DOWN. NO ONE'S GETTING ANY REVENGE HERE TODAY.

FINE, SHERIFF. WE'LL FORGO VENGEANCE. BUT HE STILL HAS TO PAY FOR IMPERSONATING OUR SAVIOR! WE'LL LYNCH HIM FOR PURELY DOCTRINAL PURPOSES.

AND ALSO SEND OUT THE DIRTY LITTLE WHORE WHO BETRAYED BLUE BY LYING WITH THE HERETIC!

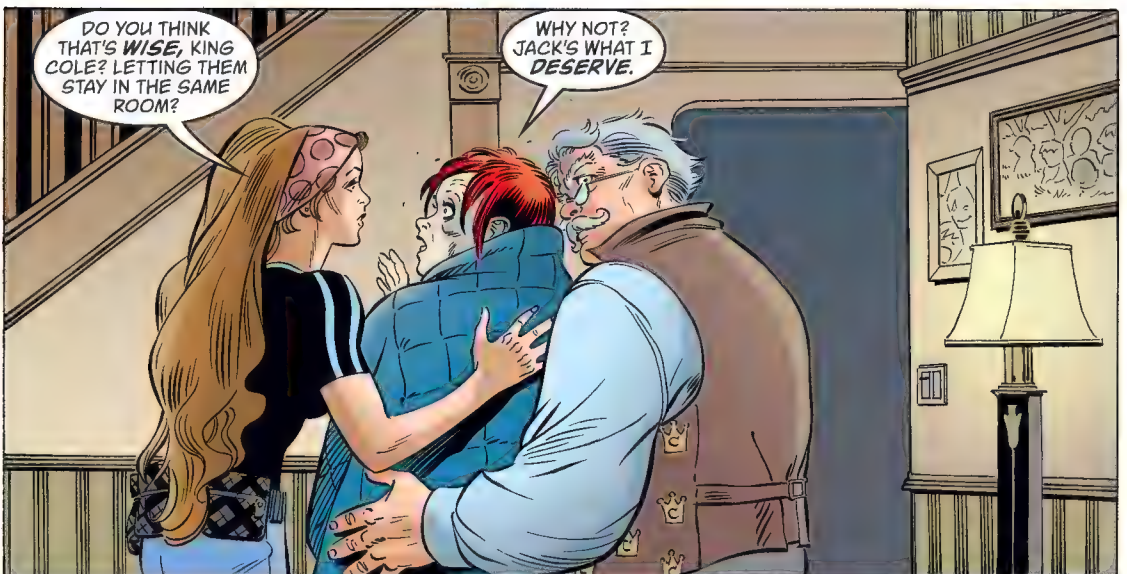
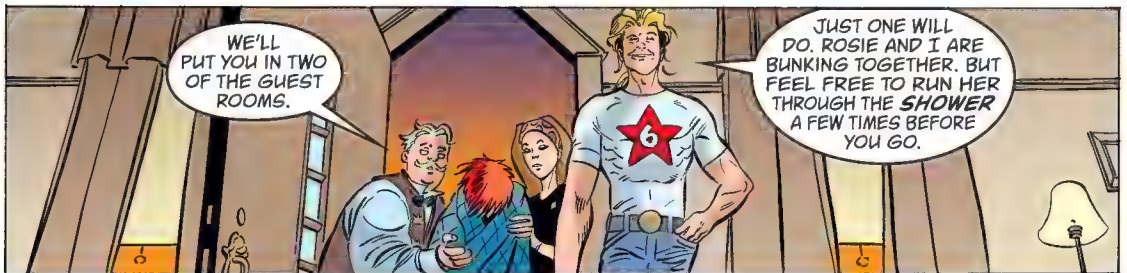
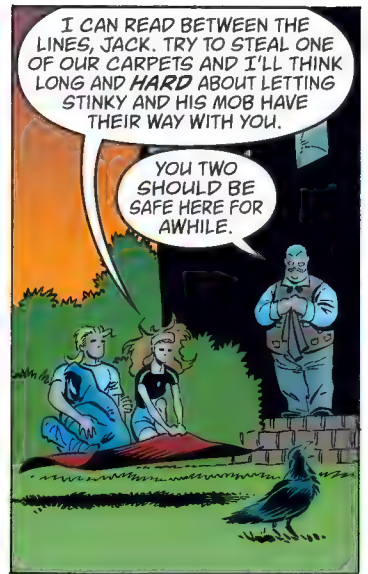
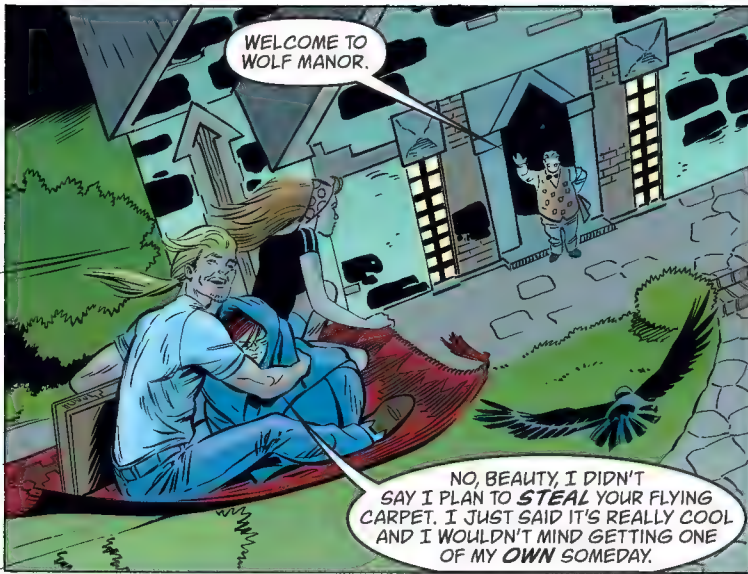
NOT TODAY, FOLKS. ROSE RED AND JACK HORNER AREN'T EVEN HERE ANYMORE, SO YOU'RE ALL WASTING BOTH YOUR TIME AND MINE.

NO ANGER. NO PASSION OF ANY KIND. JUST A TIDY CLEANING UP OF A FEW HERESIES.

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THEM?

SENT THEM AWAY.

SOMEWHERE SAFE.





NOW, YOU TWO STAY PUT. STAY OUT OF THE BOOZE AND BIGBY'S CIGARETTES. AND *ASK* BEFORE USING THE KITCHEN.

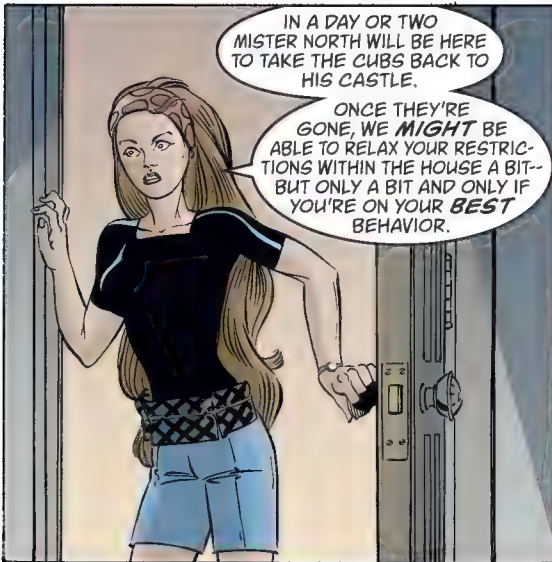
AND ABSOLUTELY *STEER CLEAR* OF THE CHILDREN.



KING COLE WILL BE IN CHARGE HERE FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, AND THEN I'LL RELIEVE HIM IN THE MORNING.

SO WE'RE PRISONERS NOW?

NO, JACK. WHAT WE ARE IS *SCUM*. BETTER GET USED TO BEING TREATED LIKE IT.



IN A DAY OR TWO MISTER NORTH WILL BE HERE TO TAKE THE CUBS BACK TO HIS CASTLE.

ONCE THEY'RE GONE, WE *MIGHT* BE ABLE TO RELAX YOUR RESTRICTIONS WITHIN THE HOUSE A BIT— BUT ONLY A BIT AND ONLY IF YOU'RE ON YOUR *BEST* BEHAVIOR.



I'LL BE HERE EARLY IN THE MORNING, SIR.

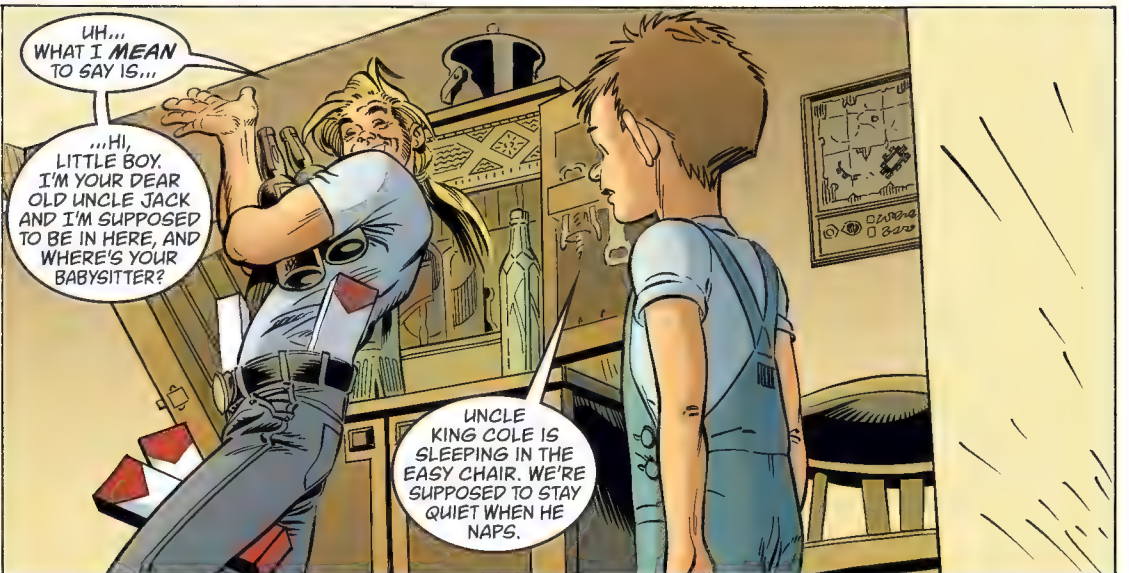
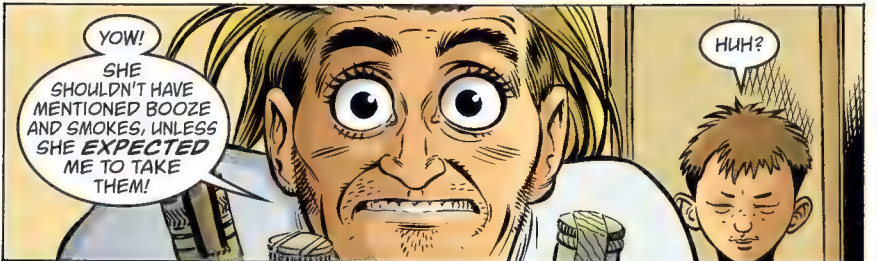
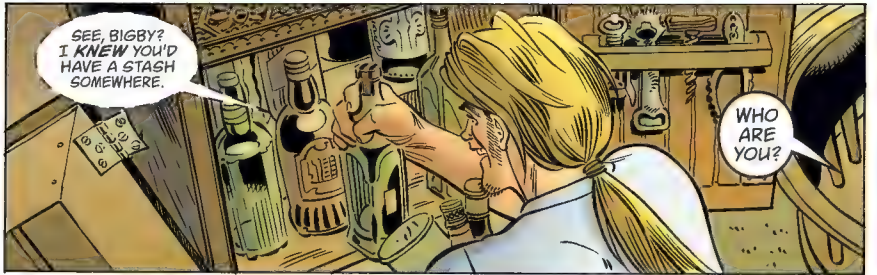


HOT DAMN! SHE'S GONE!



WHAT SAY WE GO DO THE *BIG NASTY* IN BIGBY AND SNOW'S BED?

FORGET IT, JACK. I'M TIRED. I'M GOING TO SLEEP. YOU MAKE SURE THE PIG HEAD DOESN'T WAKE ME.

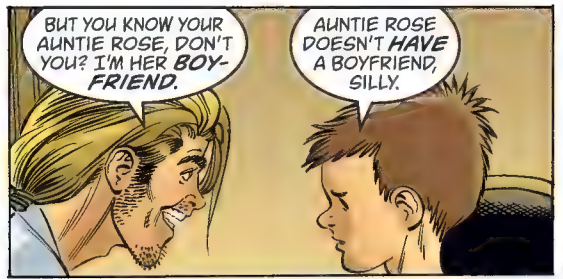




OH, GOOD BOY. WE DON'T WANT TO WAKE DEAR OLD UNCLE KING COLE. HE **NEEDS** HIS REST.

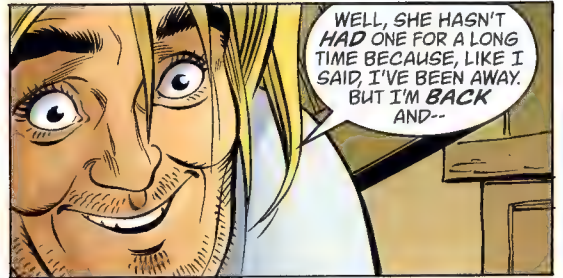
WHO ARE YOU? YOU AREN'T AN UNCLE ANYBODY, BECAUSE WE'VE NEVER SEEN YOU NO TIMES BEFORE.

NO, YOU HAVEN'T, BECAUSE I'VE BEEN AWAY FOR A LONG TIME DOING SECRET MISSIONS FOR... UHM...YOUR DAD.

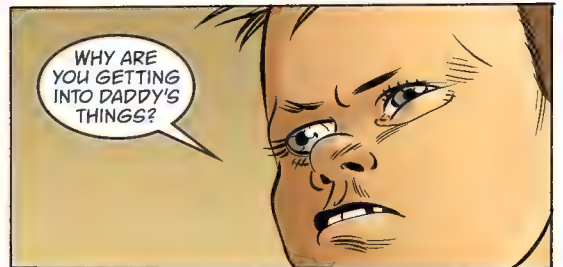


BUT YOU KNOW YOUR AUNTIE ROSE, DON'T YOU? I'M HER **BOY-FRIEND**.

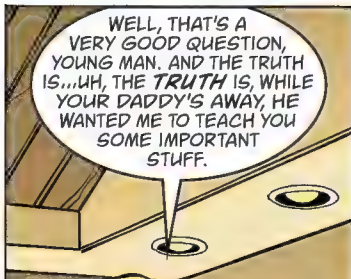
AUNTIE ROSE DOESN'T **HAVE** A BOYFRIEND, SILLY.



WELL, SHE HASN'T **HAD** ONE FOR A LONG TIME BECAUSE, LIKE I SAID, I'VE BEEN AWAY. BUT I'M **BACK** AND--



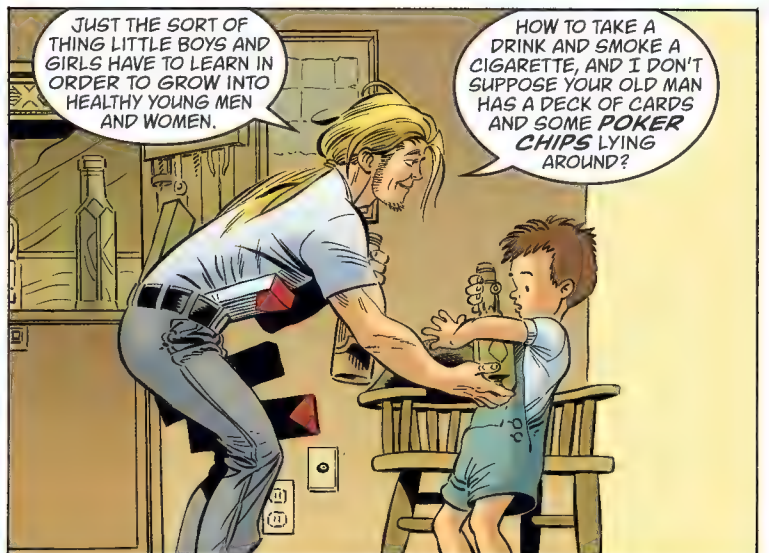
WHY ARE YOU GETTING INTO DADDY'S THINGS?



WELL, THAT'S A VERY GOOD QUESTION, YOUNG MAN. AND THE TRUTH IS...UHM, THE **TRUTH** IS, WHILE YOUR DADDY'S AWAY, HE WANTED ME TO TEACH YOU SOME IMPORTANT STUFF.



WHAT **KIND** OF STUFF?



JUST THE SORT OF THING LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS HAVE TO LEARN IN ORDER TO GROW INTO HEALTHY YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN.

HOW TO TAKE A DRINK AND SMOKE A CIGARETTE, AND I DON'T SUPPOSE YOUR OLD MAN HAS A DECK OF CARDS AND SOME **POKER CHIPS** LYING AROUND?

As the afternoon wears on...

NO, NO, NO!

YOU LITTLE BRATS HAVE TO LEARN TO STOP TRYING TO DRAW INTO AN INSIDE STRAIGHT.

BUT I WON THE POTS, RIGHT, MR. JACK?

YES, BUT YOU DIDN'T DO IT CORRECTLY! YOU SHOULD'VE FOLDED YOUR HAND THREE CARDS AGO AND NEVER FILLED THE STRAIGHT YOU WERE FISHING FOR.

TAKE IT FROM ME, LITTLE LADY, AND REMEMBER, I USED TO RUN A REAL VEGAS CASINO.

WE HAD A SAYING BACK THEN: "THOSE WHO CHASE STRAIGHTS AND FLUSHES GO HOME FROM HERE IN GREYHOUND BUSES."

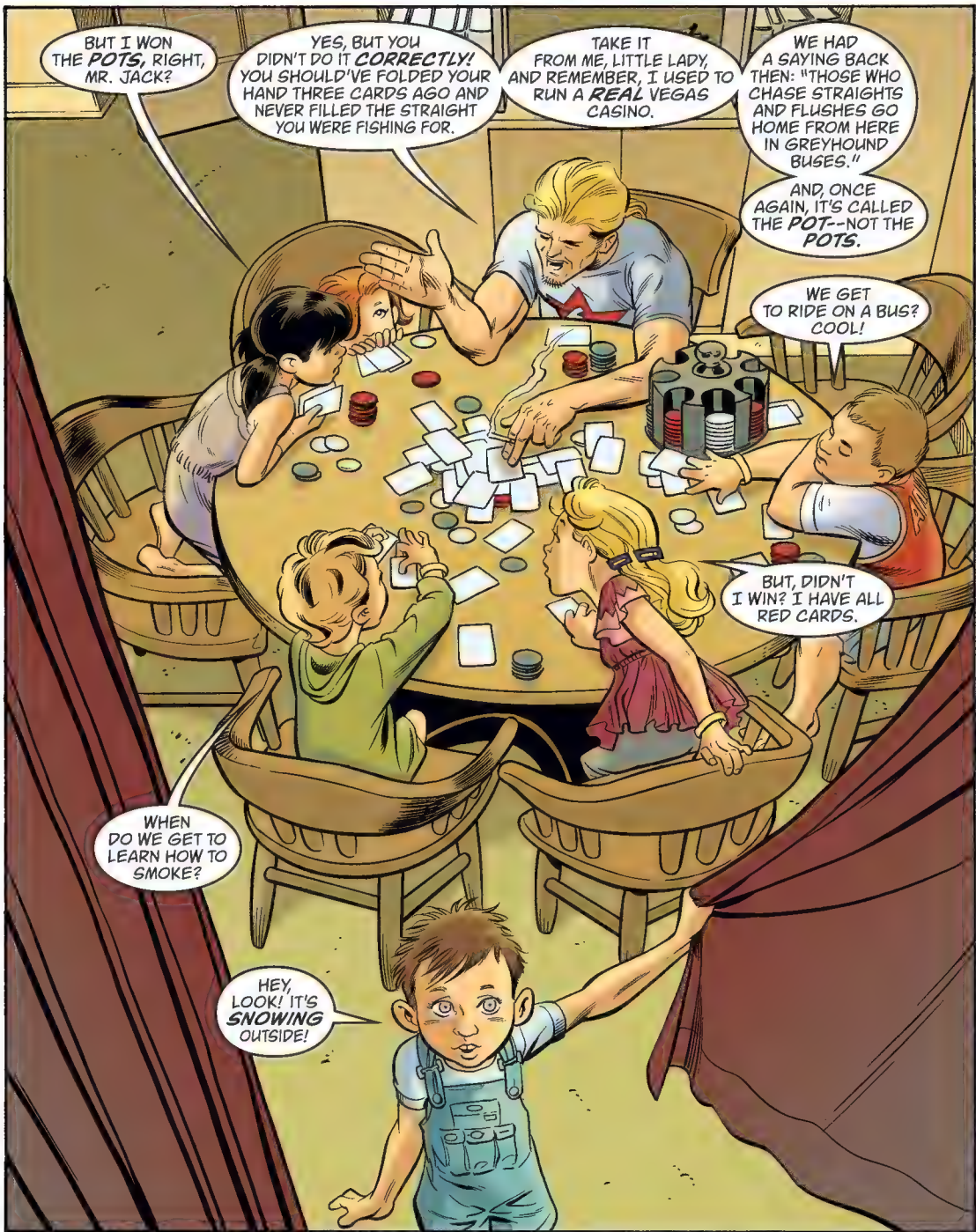
AND, ONCE AGAIN, IT'S CALLED THE POT--NOT THE POTS.

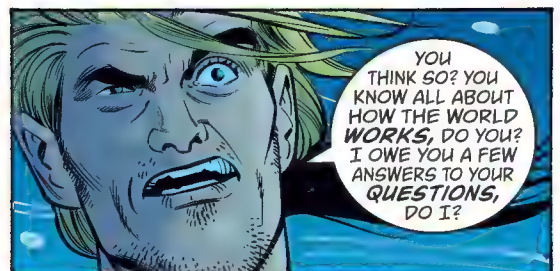
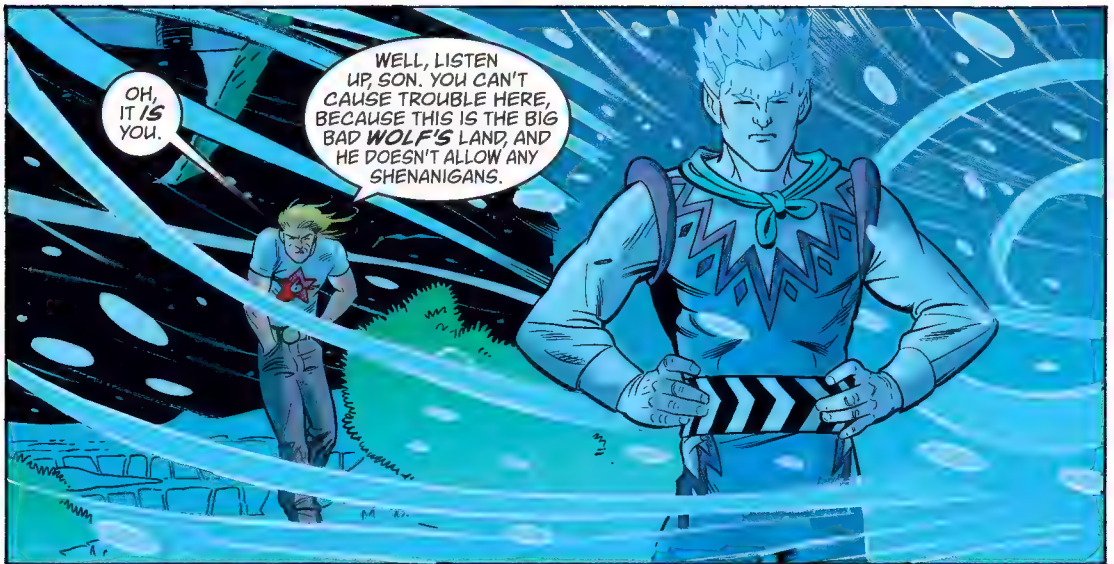
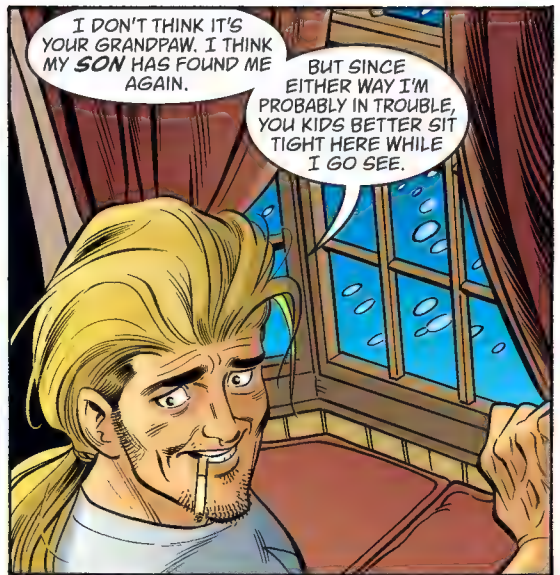
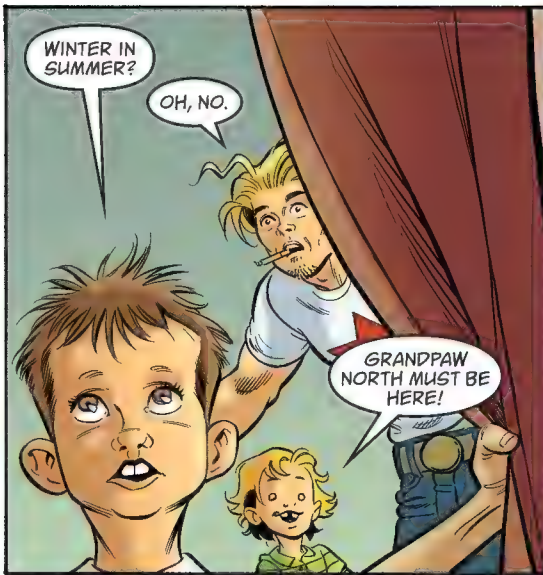
WE GET TO RIDE ON A BUS? COOL!

BUT, DIDN'T I WIN? I HAVE ALL RED CARDS.

WHEN DO WE GET TO LEARN HOW TO SMOKE?

HEY, LOOK! IT'S SNOWING OUTSIDE!







I THINK THAT'S ONLY FAIR.

FAIR, *SCHMARE*, SON. THAT MOST CERTAINLY *ISN'T* HOW THE WORLD WORKS.

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN COMPLETED YOUR HEROIC QUEST FIRST.



I COULD GET INTO ALL KINDS OF TROUBLE JUST TALKING TO YOU BEFORE YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR HEROIC QUEST.

HUH?

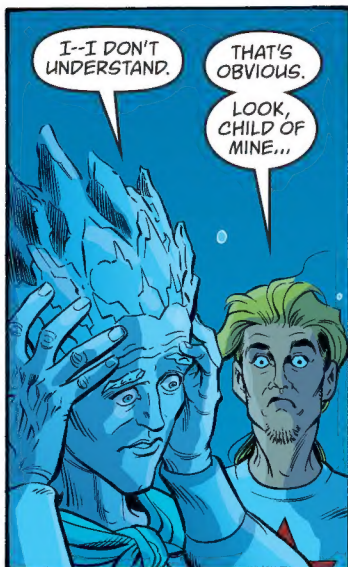


IT'S ALL ABOUT HOW THE STORIES WORK, KID. YOU'VE *READ* THE STORIES, RIGHT?



I'VE READ *SOME* STORIES, BUT--

THEN YOU DON'T HAVE AN EXCUSE FOR NOT KNOWING THE RULES! WE NEED TO WORK *FAST*, SON, IF WE'RE GOING TO KEEP YOU OUT OF TROUBLE.



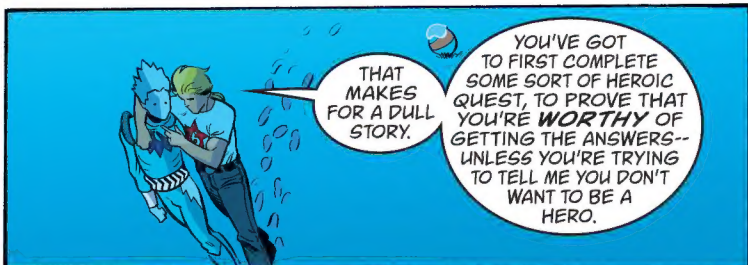
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

THAT'S OBVIOUS.

LOOK, CHILD OF MINE...



...YOU CAN'T JUST WALK UP TO YOUR LONG-LOST FATHER, WHO YOU'VE BEEN *PINING* FOR FOR CENTURIES, AND THEN SIMPLY START BARKING QUESTIONS.



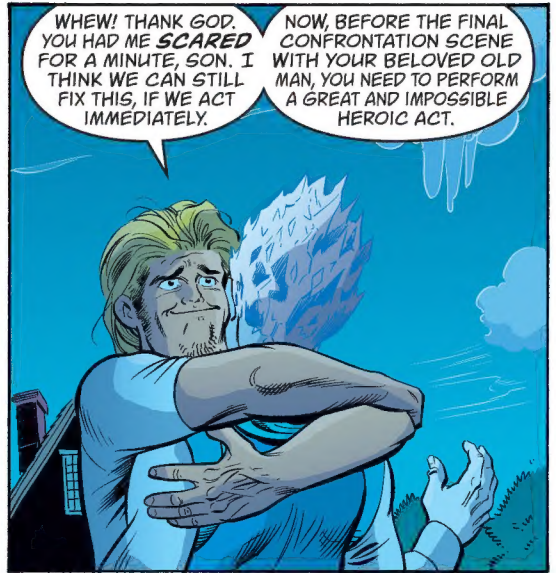
THAT MAKES FOR A DULL STORY.

YOU'VE GOT TO FIRST COMPLETE SOME SORT OF HEROIC QUEST, TO PROVE THAT YOU'RE *WORTHY* OF GETTING THE ANSWERS-- UNLESS YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME YOU DON'T WANT TO BE A HERO.



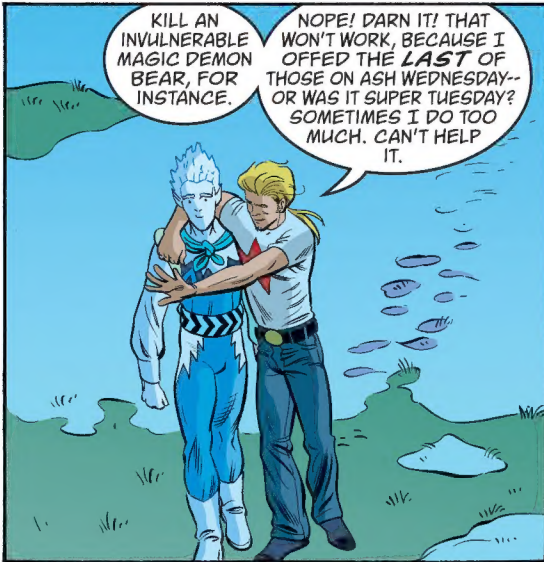
PLEASE, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, **DON'T** TELL ME YOU'RE A **COWARD**. DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE FIRST JACK IN SIX HUNDRED GENERATIONS OF JACKS THAT ISN'T TRUE **HERO** MATERIAL.

UHM... I'M NOT-- I DIDN'T THINK--



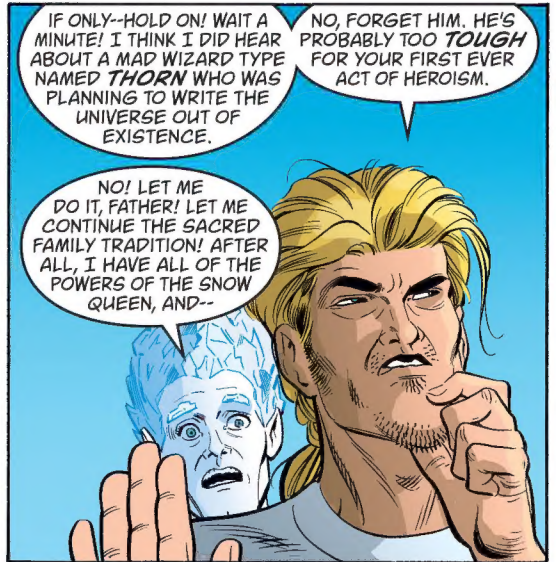
WHEW! THANK GOD, YOU HAD ME **SCARED** FOR A MINUTE, SON. I THINK WE CAN STILL FIX THIS, IF WE ACT IMMEDIATELY.

NOW, BEFORE THE FINAL CONFRONTATION SCENE WITH YOUR BELOVED OLD MAN, YOU NEED TO PERFORM A GREAT AND IMPOSSIBLE HEROIC ACT.



KILL AN INVULNERABLE MAGIC DEMON BEAR, FOR INSTANCE.

NOPE! DARN IT! THAT WON'T WORK, BECAUSE I OFFED THE **LAST** OF THOSE ON ASH WEDNESDAY-- OR WAS IT SUPER TUESDAY? SOMETIMES I DO TOO MUCH. CAN'T HELP IT.



IF ONLY-- HOLD ON! WAIT A MINUTE! I THINK I DID HEAR ABOUT A MAD WIZARD TYPE NAMED **THORN** WHO WAS PLANNING TO WRITE THE UNIVERSE OUT OF EXISTENCE.

NO, FORGET HIM. HE'S PROBABLY TOO **TOUGH** FOR YOUR FIRST EVER ACT OF HEROISM.

NO! LET ME DO IT, FATHER! LET ME CONTINUE THE SACRED FAMILY TRADITION! AFTER ALL, I HAVE ALL OF THE POWERS OF THE SNOW QUEEN, AND--



OKAY, YOU'VE CONVINCED ME.

NOW, HERE'S WHAT YOU DO. TRACK DOWN AN HOMBRE NAMED BIGBY WOLF AND HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO LEAD YOU TO THE DREAD WIZARD THORN.

The Great Fables Crossover continues in Jack of Fables #35!

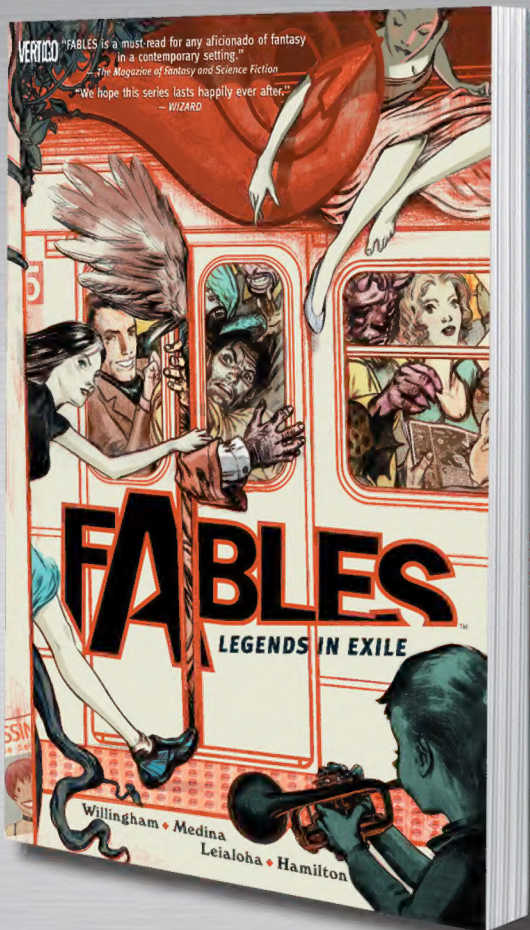
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BILL WILLINGHAM

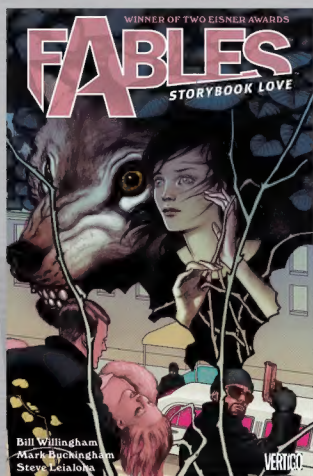
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- 1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL**



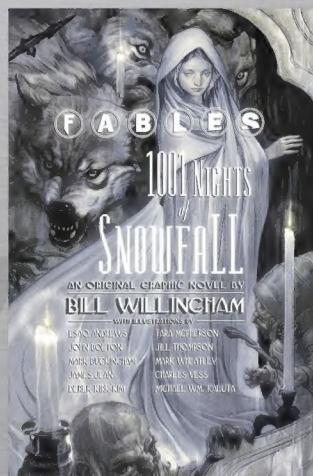
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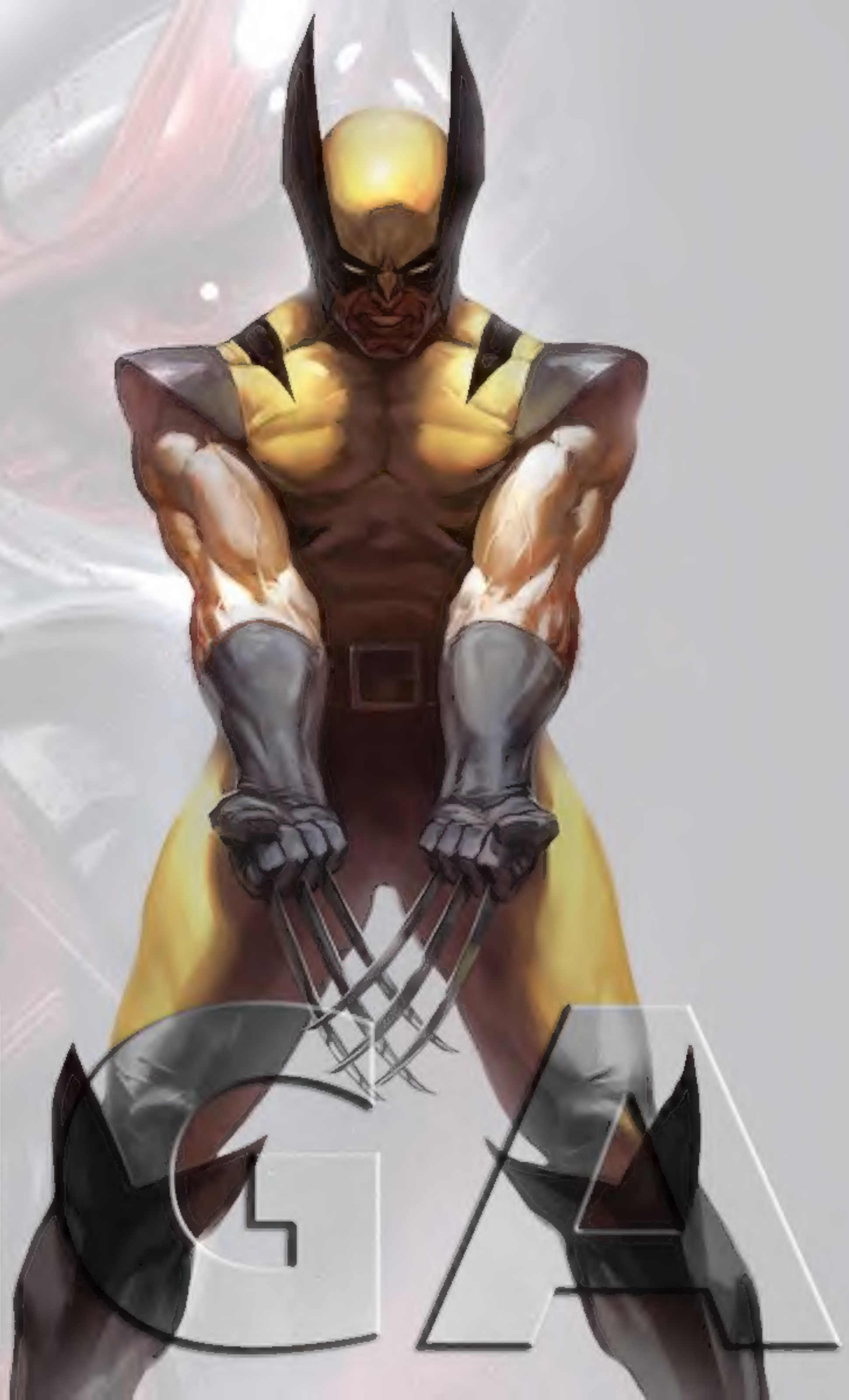


FABLES:
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